

WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio tonight responded to President Obama's State of the Union address. The following are DeFazio's remarks:

"President Obama kicked off his State of the Union speech by expressing strong concern for putting Americans back to work. That will resonate with many Oregonians. He followed up with an emphasis on investing in our crumbling infrastructure, something that has the capability of quickly putting millions of Americans back to work. That's not just in construction, but in manufacturing, engineering, small business contractors, and others. I have long urged the administration to get serious about this kind of investment, and will push the president to follow through on this pledge and for increased investments.

"He talked about security for our seniors. I agree that we cannot take away the promise of Social Security, and we cannot privatize Medicare or deny people benefits in their time of need.

"He talked about security for our kids. I agree that we must give the next generation a good solid education that will prepare them for post-graduate education in fields with good paying jobs and we need to make that opportunity more affordable.

"He acknowledged the mountain of debt we're going to leave to our kids and grandkids. We can reduce this debt in a fair way by asking the wealthiest among us, the large corporations, and others that get special tax breaks to pay their fair share. The president talked about the stupidity of the so-called sequester and the indiscriminate across-the-board budget cuts to programs like county payments which will impact law enforcement and other vital programs in Southwest Oregon. He said it should be replaced with targeted cuts, and targeted revenues by closing corporate and special interest tax loopholes. I couldn't agree more.

"He talked about the need to put partisanship behind so we can meaningfully address some of the most pressing problems confronting our nation. I'm only hopeful that many of my colleagues listened and that we can begin again in this new congress to tackle these issues on a much

more bipartisan basis.”

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